

Message Text

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15

ACTION NEA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3623

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

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AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

USIA WASHDC

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SUBJECT: SYRIAN EDITORIAL COMMENT ON AMERICAN POLICY

1. SEVERAL SYRIAN COMMENTATORS OVER PAST FEW DAYS HAVE WRITTEN ARTICLES ON RECENT U.S. POLICY STATEMENTS TOWARD MIDDLE EAST. AL-THAWRAH EDITOR ALI SULAYMAN JUNE 1 WONDERED WHETHER U.S. POLICY WAS DIRECTED TOWARD GENEVA, FURTHER SHUTTLES, OR COMPLETE INACTION. ALTHOUGH HE NOTED THAT "ANSWER IS DIFFICULT," HE SAW U.S. POLICY AS HEADED FOR INACTION, THE "FORMULA MOST SUITABLE FOR ENEMIES FO ARAB NATION." SULAYMAN THEN ASKED RHETORICALLY WAHT ARAB POSITION SHOULD BE, AND REPLIED THAT "ONLY ACTIVE AND UNIFIED ARAB POSITION CAN DIRECT MIDDLE EAST PROBLEM TOWARD JUST SETTLEMENT AND PREVENT IT FROM PROCEEDING ANEW TOWARD INACTION OR DEADLOCK."

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2. AL-BAATH COLUMNIST MUHAMMAD MANSUR JUNE 1 MAIN-

TAINED THAT U.S. INTEREST IN GREECE, TURKEY AND PORTUGAL SPRINGS FROM THEIR STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE VIS-A-VIS ARAB OIL. HE CONCLUDED THAT "NEW AMERICAN POLICY IS ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FOR ISRAEL IN ORDER TO FOIL INTERNATIONAL EFFORTS TO ESTABLISH JUST AND DURABLE PEACE IN MIDDLE EAST."

3. MAJID MUAWAD IN JUNE 1 AL-BAATH DOUBTED SINCERITY OF U.S. POLICY REASSESSMENT, COMMENTING THAT "AMERICAN INSISTENCE ON POLICY OF STAGES COUPLED WITH REINFORCEMENT OF ISRAELI MILITARY POWER SHOWS THAT ONLY MOTIVATION OF REASSESSMENT IS STRENGTHENING OF ISRAEL SO AS TO KEEP IT THE BASTION OF IMPERIALISM IN REGION."

4. IN JUNE 3 AL-BAATH COLUMNIST HISHAM SHISHAKLI COMMENTED THAT "ROAD TO FORCE IS ALWAYS IN VIEW" AS LONG AS ISRAEL REJECTS WITHDRAWAL FROM OCCUPIED TERRITORIES AND RECOGNITION OF PALESTINIAN RIGHTS WHILE RELYING ON U.S. FOR "UNLIMITED AND UNCONDITIONAL SUPPORT." HE CONCLUDED BY NOTING THAT "ARABS HAVE THEIR VOICE TO RAISE, AND UNDOUBTEDLY VOICE IS STRONGER THAT PRE-OCTOBER VOICE, AND IT WILL NOT ACCEPT PARTIAL SETTLEMENTS OR POLICY OF POSTPONEMENT AND PROCRASTINATION."

5. QASIM YAGHI IN JUNE 3 AL-THAWRAH ELABORATED ON PALESTINIAN SUCCESSES, ESPECIALLY INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION. HE PLACED UNDERSECY SISCO'S RECENT STATEMENT ON "LEGITIMATE INTERESTS OF PALESTINIAN PEOPLE" IN CONTEXT OF PALESTINIANS BY THEIR OWN EFFORTS IMPOSING THEMSELVES ON INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY. GOVERNMENTS, HE ASSERTED, MUST EVENTUALLY RECOGNIZE A FAIT ACCOMPLI, AND THIS IS POSITION OF U.S. TOWARD CAUSE OF ARAB PALESTINIAN PEOPLE.

6. COMMENT: DOUBTS AND CYNICISM RE U.S. POLICY REASSESSMENT AND U.S. SUPPORT FOR ISRAEL, AS WELL AS CALLS FOR UNDEFINED ARAB UNITY ARE STANDARD SYRIAN EDITORIAL FARE. YAGHI'S ANALYSIS OF GRADUAL SHIFT IN U.S. POLICY TOWARD PALESTINIANS IS ONE WE SOMETIMES HEAR FROM SYRIANS BUT SELDOM SEE IN PRINT. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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